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Sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 20 (see A/65/436, para. 2). Action on sub-item (d) was taken at the 28th and 31st meetings, on 12 and 24 November 2010. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/65/SR.28 and 31).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/65/L.33 and A/C.2/65/L.51

2. At the 28th meeting, on 12 November, the representative of Yemen, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" (A/C.2/65/L.33), which read:

> "*The General Assembly*,
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> "*Recalling* its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988, 54/222 of 22 December 1999, 62/86 of 10 December 2007, 63/32 of 26 November 2008 and 64/73 of 7 December 2009 and resolutions and decisions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,
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> "*Recalling also* the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all

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countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

"*Recalling further* the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which Heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,

"*Recalling* the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'),

"*Recalling also* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

"*Recalling further* the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals and its outcome,

"*Recalling* the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007,

"*Reaffirming* the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

"*Remaining deeply concerned* that all countries, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, face increased risks from the adverse effects of climate change, and stressing the need to address adaptation needs relating to such effects,

"*Recognizing* that low-lying and other small island countries, countries with low-lying coastal, arid and semi-arid areas or areas liable to floods, drought and desertification, and developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change,

"*Noting* that, to date, there are one hundred and ninety-four parties to the Convention, including one hundred and ninety-three States and one regional economic integration organization,

"*Noting also* that, currently, the Kyoto Protocol has attracted one hundred and ninety ratifications, accessions, acceptances or approvals, including by thirty-nine parties included in annex I to the Convention,

"*Noting further* the amendment to annex B to the Kyoto Protocol,

"*Noting* the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the need to build and enhance scientific and technological capabilities, inter alia, through continuing support to the Panel for the exchange of scientific data and information, especially in developing countries,

"*Noting also* the significance of the scientific findings of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, providing an integrated scientific, technical and socio-economic perspective on relevant issues and contributing positively to the discussions under the Convention and the understanding of the phenomenon of climate change, including its impacts and risks,

"*Reaffirming* that economic and social development and poverty eradication are global priorities,

"*Recognizing* that deep cuts in global emissions will be required to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

"*Reaffirming its commitment* to the ultimate objective of the Convention, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, and also reaffirming that such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner,

"*Reaffirming* the financial obligations of developed country parties and other developed parties included in annex II under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol,

"*Acknowledging* women as key actors in the efforts towards sustainable development, and recognizing that a gender perspective can contribute to efforts to address climate change,

"*Taking note* of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

"1. *Recognizes* the urgency to address the challenge of climate change, and calls upon States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through the urgent implementation of its provisions;

"2. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change welcome the entry into force of the Protocol on 16 February 2005 and strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

"3. *Takes note* of the outcome of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of Denmark from 6 to 18 December 2009;

"4. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Mexico to host the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Cancun, Mexico, from 29 November to 10 December 2010;

"5. *Notes* the ongoing parallel work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention and the Ad Hoc Working

Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol, and that the respective parties to the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol call for an early completion of this work in accordance with their respective mandates and ensuring in particular that there is no gap between the first and the second commitment periods under the Kyoto Protocol;

"6. *Encourages* Member States to approach Cancun with ambition, optimism and determination, with a view to achieving a substantive and ambitious outcome at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the Conference of Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in accordance with the principles and objectives of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol;

"7. *Takes note with appreciation*, in this regard, of the offer of the Government of South Africa to host the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the seventh session of the Conference of Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in 2011;

"8. *Urges* parties to the Convention, and invites parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention, to continue to make use of the information contained in the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in their work;

"9. *Recognizes* that climate change poses serious risks and challenges to all countries, particularly developing countries, especially the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, including those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and calls upon States to take urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principles identified in the Convention, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and in this regard urges all countries to fully implement their commitments under the Convention, to take effective and concrete actions and measures at all levels and to enhance international cooperation in the framework of the Convention;

"10. *Reaffirms* that efforts to address climate change in a manner that enhances the sustainable development and sustained economic growth of the developing countries and the eradication of poverty should be carried out by promoting the integration of the three components of sustainable development, namely, economic development, social development and environmental protection, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars, in an integrated, coordinated and balanced manner;

"11. *Recognizes* the urgent need to provide further support in the implementation of the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol;

"12. *Recognizes further* the urgency of providing financial and technical resources, as well as capacity-building and access to and transfer of technology, to assist those developing countries adversely affected by climate change;

"13. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Framework Convention, the

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and encourages close cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

"14. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

"15. *Invites* the secretariat of the Framework Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

"16. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session the sub-item entitled 'Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind'."

3. At its 31st meeting, on 24 November, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" (A/C.2/65/L.51), submitted by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Csilla Würtz (Hungary), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/65/L.33.

4. At the same meeting, upon the proposal of the Chair, the Committee agreed to waive the relevant provision of rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.2/65/L.51.

5. Also at the same meeting, the Committee was informed that draft resolution A/C.2/65/L.51 had no programme budget implications.

6. Also at its 31st meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/65/L.51 (see para. 8).

7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/65/L.51, draft resolution A/C.2/65/L.33 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988, 54/222 of 22 December 1999, 62/86 of 10 December 2007, 63/32 of 26 November 2008 and 64/73 of 7 December 2009 and other resolutions and decisions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of humankind,

Recalling also the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[1] including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[2] in which Heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[3] and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,

Recalling the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[4] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[5]

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[6]

Recalling further the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals and its outcome,[7]

Recalling the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007,[8] and noting the outcomes of all previous sessions,

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[2] See resolution 55/2.

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2303, No. 30822.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[6] See resolution 60/1.

[7] See resolution 65/1.

[8] FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1 and 2 and FCCC/KP/CMP/2007/9/Add.1 and 2.

Reaffirming the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[9] the Mauritius Declaration[10] and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[11]

Remaining deeply concerned that all countries, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, face increased risks from the adverse effects of climate change, and stressing the need to address adaptation needs relating to such effects,

Recognizing that low-lying and other small island countries, countries with low-lying coastal, arid and semi-arid areas or areas liable to floods, drought and desertification, and developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change,

Noting that, to date, there are one hundred and ninety-four parties to the Convention, including one hundred and ninety-three States and one regional economic integration organization,

Noting also that, currently, the Kyoto Protocol has attracted one hundred and ninety-three ratifications, accessions, acceptances or approvals, including by thirty-nine parties included in annex I to the Convention,

Noting further the amendment to annex B to the Kyoto Protocol,[12]

Noting the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the need to build and enhance scientific and technological capabilities, inter alia, through continuing support to the Panel for the exchange of scientific data and information, especially in developing countries,

Noting also the significance of the scientific findings of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, providing an integrated scientific, technical and socio-economic perspective on relevant issues and contributing positively to the discussions under the Convention and the understanding of the phenomenon of climate change, including its impacts and risks,

Reaffirming that poverty eradication and sustainable development are global priorities,

Recognizing that deep cuts in global emissions will be required to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Reaffirming its commitment to the ultimate objective of the Convention, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, and also

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[9] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[10] *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[11] Ibid., annex II.

[12] FCCC/KP/CMP/2006/10/Add.1, decision 10/CMP.2, annex.

reaffirming that such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner,

Reaffirming the financial obligations of developed country parties and other developed parties included in annex II under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol,

Acknowledging women as key actors in the efforts towards sustainable development, and recognizing that a gender perspective can contribute to efforts to address climate change,

Taking note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[13]

1. *Recognizes* the urgency of addressing, and the seriousness of, the challenge of climate change, and calls upon States to show strong political will in working cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] through the urgent implementation of its provisions;

2. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[3] welcome the entry into force of the Protocol on 16 February 2005, and strongly urges States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

3. *Takes note* of the outcome of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of Denmark from 7 to 19 December 2009;[14]

4. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Mexico to host the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Cancun from 29 November to 10 December 2010;

5. *Notes* the ongoing parallel work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol, in accordance with their respective mandates, and that the respective parties to the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol call for the completion of this work;

6. *Encourages* Member States to approach the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancun with optimism and determination, with a view to achieving a substantive, balanced and ambitious outcome of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;

7. *Takes note with appreciation*, in this regard, of the offer of the Government of South Africa to host the seventeenth session of the Conference of the

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[13] A/65/294, sect. I.

[14] FCCC/CP/2009/11 and Add.1 and FCCC/KP/CMP/2009/21 and Add.1.

Parties to the Convention and the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in 2011;

8. *Urges* parties to the Convention, and invites parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention, to continue to make use of the information contained in the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in their work;

9. *Recognizes* that climate change poses serious risks and challenges to all countries, particularly developing countries, especially the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, including those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and calls upon States to take urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principles identified in the Convention, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and in this regard urges all countries to fully implement their commitments under the Convention, to take effective and concrete actions and measures at all levels and to enhance international cooperation in the framework of the Convention;

10. *Reaffirms* that efforts to address climate change in a manner that enhances the sustainable development and sustained economic growth of the developing countries and the eradication of poverty should be carried out by promoting the integration of the three components of sustainable development, namely, economic development, social development and environmental protection, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars, in an integrated, coordinated and balanced manner;

11. *Recognizes* the urgency of providing financial and technical resources, as well as capacity-building and access to and transfer of technology, to assist those developing countries adversely affected by climate change;

12. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Framework Convention, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[15] and the Convention on Biological Diversity,[16] and encourages close cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

13. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

14. *Invites* the secretariat of the Framework Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session the sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind".

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[15] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[16] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.